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ORIGINAL

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
DOCKET SECTION

BEFORE THE

97 OCT 28 PM 12:43 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

English Language Requirement;)	
Qualifications of Drivers)	Docket No.
Advance Notice of Proposed)	FHWA-97-2759-45
Rulemaking)	

Fritz Companies, Inc. Comments

By a notice published in the August 26, 1997 Federal Register, 62 F.R. 45200, the Federal Highway Administration requested that comments be filed in the captioned proceeding on whether it should change its current general standard that drivers of commercial motor vehicles operated in interstate commerce be able to read and speak the English language sufficiently to converse with the general public, to understand highway traffic signs and signals, to respond to official inquiries, and to make entries on reports and records. Fritz Companies, Inc., ("Fritz") a company with 9,000 employees offering air and ocean freight forwarding, warehousing and distribution and related information services, respectfully provides the following comments in response to the FHWA request.

Fritz sees no reason for the FHWA to change its regulations from the current general standards to performance-based standards or to adopt any other standards which would result in more specific Federal regulation of commercial motor vehicle operators. It is Fritz's experience that the state of California has, for example, not only applied the general standard, but has adopted regulations which allow drivers to take tests in either English or Spanish and over the road instruction manuals are written in both Spanish and English.

The California approach reflects the ability of the local marketplace to address and to resolve these issues. As non-English speaking drivers are brought into the business environment, Fritz's experience has been that they quickly increase their knowledge of the English language and that the number of complaints concerning drivers' language capability is virtually non-existent.

In sum, Fritz is opposed to any changes in the current regulations that would impose greater federal oversight in this

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area. The issue is one that is clearly capable of being properly handled by state government and, in Fritz's view, the states are handling the oversight well.

Fritz appreciates the opportunity to file these comments.

Respectfully submitted,

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